

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03

PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 MCT-01 TRSE-00 SY-05 AID-05

/063 W

-----107598 152218Z /62

O R 152130Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6584

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AEMEMBASSY PANAMA 1998

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 2233

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PGOV, NU

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PEDRO JOSE CHAMORRO POESSY,

MAY 12, 1978

REF: (A) MANAGUA 0622, (B) MANAGUA 1644

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN THE EARLY MORNING OF MAY 12, PEDRO JOSE CHAMORRO POESSY, COUSIN OF ASSASSINATED OPPOSITION LEADER AND JOURNALIST, PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO CARDENAL, WAS ASSASSINATED IN HIS HOUSE. AS OF THIS DATE, THE POLICE HAVE NO LEADS AND MANY MYSTERIOUS ASPECTS OF THE KILLING REMAIN UNEXPLAINED. END SUMMARY.

1. ON MAY 12, PEDRO JOSE CHAMORRO POESSY, COUSIN OF ASSASSINATED OPPOSITION LEADER PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO CARDENAL, WAS SHOT AND KILLED BY FOUR MEN IN HIS HOME ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF MANAGUA. TO DATE, MANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ASSASSINATION HAVE BEEN RAISED. NONE OF THEM HAVE BEEN  
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ANSWERED.

2. BASED ON PRESS AND RADIO REPORTS AND EMBOFF CONVERSATIONS WITH FRIENDS OF CHAMORRO, IT APPEARS THAT FOUR MASKED MEN ARRIVED VIA TAXI AT APPROXIMATELY 3:30 A.M. AND ENTERED THE HOUSE THROUGH AN UNLOCKED SERVICE ENTRANCE. TWO MEN KEPT WATCH OVER MRS. CHAMORRO AND SON, GUILLERMO

FRUTOS, WHILE FOR APPROXIMATELY TEN MINUTES, ANOTHER TWO MEN AND CHAMORRO WERE IN THE BEDROOM, PRESUMABLY CONVERSING. AT THE END OF THIS PERIOD, SIX 9 MM SHOTS WERE FIRED INTO CHAMORRO'S BODY. THE FOUR MEN THEN FLED.

3. THIS CHAMORRO ASSASSINATION PRESENTS SEVERAL MYSTERIOUS ASPECTS. UNLIKE HIS COUSIN PEDRO JOAQUIN, PEDRO JOSE UNTIL RECENTLY WORKED FOR AND WAS ON VERY GOOD TERMS WITH THE SOMOZA REGIME. UNTIL DECEMBER 1977, HE WORKED AS AN AIDE TO LUIS MANUEL DEBAYLE SACASA, UNCLE OF PRESIDENT SOMOZA AND THEN PRESIDENT OF ENALUF (NICARAGUAN LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY), AND WAS ACTIVE IN THE LIBERAL PARTY YOUTH ORGANIZATION. WITH DEBAYLE'S DEPARTURE FROM THE GON, CHAMORRO'S TWELVE-YEAR LINK WITH THE REGIME WAS ABRUPTLY BROKEN.

4. IN FEBRUARY 1978, ONE OF HIS SONS SOUGHT ASYLUM IN THE EMBASSY, ADMITTING TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND FSLN SYMPATHIES (REF A). A SECOND SON JOINED HIS BROTHER IN THE MEXICAN EMBASSY AND BOTH WERE GRANTED ASYLUM AND ARE NOW IN MEXICO. A THIRD SON STAGED A SIT-IN PROTEST, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS PARENTS, AT THE EMBASSY (REF B). SINCE THAT TIME, ONE PRO-REGIME RADIO STATION ATTACKED THE FATHER ON THE AIR AND HIS HOUSE REPORTEDLY HAD A BOMB THROWN AT IT. ACCORDING TO LA PRENSA, RECENTLY CHAMORRO CLAIMED HE HAD BEEN FOLLOWED SEVERAL TIMES.

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5. AS OF THIS WRITING, THE POLICE HAVE TURNED UP NO CLUES. THE AFFAIR APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN WELL-ORGANIZED AND EXECUTED.

6. CURRENTLY, SPECULATION CENTERS ON THREE POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR THE ASSASSINATION:  
FIRST, A RIGHT-WING PARAMILITARY GROUP MAY HAVE ASSASSINATED HIM. (NOTE: DURING THE PAST FEW MONTHS THERE HAS BEEN TALK OF SUCH A GROUP AND SOME EVENTS, SUCH AS THIS ASSASSINATION, HAVE BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO THEM. TO DATE, THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN UNABLE TO DOCUMENT OR OTHERWISE SUBSTANTIATE THE EXISTENCE OF SUCH A GROUP. END NOTE.) ONE OPPOSITION POLITICIAN TOLD EMBOFF THAT CHAMORRO HAD BEEN ACTIVE IN THE ORGANIZATION OF A RIGHT WING TERRORIST GROUP (THE WHITE HAND) AND "JNEW TOO MUCH" ABOUT ITS MEMBERS AND OPERATIONS. HIS RECENT "DEFECTION" FROM THE GON MIGHT HAVE BEEN A THREAT TO THE GROUP. THE MOST CURIOUS ASPECT OF THE ASSASSINATION, THE TEN-MINUTE CONVERSATION BEFORE THE SHOOTING, IS EXPLAINED IN THIS SCENARIO AS AN INTERROGATION OF CHAMORRO BEFORE ELIMINATING HIM.

SECOND, THE FSLN MIGHT HAVE KILLED HIM. THE REASON FOR THIS THEORY IS UNCLEAR. HOWEVER, A PHOTOGRAPH TURNED

UP OF MRS. CHAMORRO WITH A PERSON SUSPECTED OF BEING INVOLVED IN THE ASSASSINATION OF GEN. PEREZ VEGA. THIRD, IT MAY HAVE BEEN A CRIME MOTIVATED BY PASSION. EMBASSY HAS HEARD THAT CHAMORRO'S WIFE HAD PREVIOUSLY ATTEMPTED TO KILL HIM. THE CHAMORROS' REPORTEDLY HAD SERIOUS MARITAL DIFFICULTIES AND EARLIER HAD SEPARATED.

7. THERE HAS BEEN NO SPECULATION HERE THAT THERE IS ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN THIS ASSASSINATION AND THE ASSASSINATION OF PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO.

8. EMB WILL KEEP DEPARTMENT ADVISED OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.  
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## Message Attributes

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